

Today's News - Tuesday, July 12, 2011

- San Diego decides to dissolve its planning department into the city's department of development services; some see it as "risky at best"; others see it as a big time and money saver.
- Ouroussoff is absolutely awe-struck by OMA's CCTV tower: it "may be the greatest work of architecture built in this century"; if that isn't enough to convince you, Koolhaas has created "one of the most beguiling and powerful works I've seen in a lifetime of looking at architecture" (wowiee kazowiee - we think he likes it!).
- Houston has high hopes (and is a bit awe-struck) by the shortlist for its new museum: whichever is selected certainly "won't blend into the background."
- The Royal Alberta Museum short list certainly includes some global flair.
- But not all are pleased with the lack of transparency and public input: "it's absurd to hold a competition...then deny Albertans the right to see their entries...why keep us in the dark?"
- Meet the "new breed of zealous 20-somethings and 30-somethings leaving their mark" on Melbourne (+ State of Design Festival highlights).
- The RMAQ Center for Architectural Conservation faces some daunting challenges in its efforts to renovate and restore old buildings and heritage sites in the Palestinian territories.
- Mies's once-shuttered Montreal gas station is "getting a beautiful new life" as a youth and senior center.
- Jenkins cheers the return of St Pancras hotel (where he threw "flash" parties in its ruins 30 years ago), but bemoans George Gilbert Scott remaining "the unsung hero of British architecture."
- Davidson offers an amusing tale of Gorst finding the original "three-bedroom suburban box" on Long Island that served as the model home that hosted the Nixon/Khrushchev Kitchen Debate in Moscow.
- Rose joins today's Google doodle in celebrating the 450th anniversary of Moscow's St Basil's Cathedral: "it's a good time to step back and consider what a fantastically, psychedelically bizarre symbol it is...Could it have influenced the likes of Gaudi, or even Gehry?" (Google's doodle is a doozy!)
- Datum:KL - Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival (only up until Saturday) "gives visitors a broad view of what architects do and how they think, and guides us to pause and examine Kuala Lumpur's 'unseen' architecture."
- New Zealand's Maori Television is offering a "fascinating" 13-part series about Maori architecture that explores Maori cultural and social history through its built environment.
- We couldn't resist: An amazing slide show essay about "the world's most beautiful wastelands and fascinating post-apocalyptic spots."

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Down with the Plan? Opinions mixed on dissolution of San Diego's planning department: ...decision to fold the city's planning department into the city's department of development services looks risky at best...Mayor Sanders claimed that merging planning with development services would "save as much as \$1 billion by eliminating duplication." -- [Bill Anderson/AECOM](#); [Teddy Cruz](#); [Eric Naslund/Studio E Architects](#); [Kelly Broughton - The Architect's Newspaper](#)

Rem Koolhaas, Delirious in Beijing: Aside from the new World Trade Center, it's hard to think of a more contentious architectural project in the last few years than the CCTV building...Yet for all that, [it] may be the greatest work of architecture built in this century...it is one of the most beguiling and powerful works I've seen in a lifetime of looking at architecture. By [Nicolai Ouroussoff](#) -- [Office for Metropolitan Architecture/OMA](#) - [New York Times](#)

"Starchitect" finalists for MFAH [Museum of Fine Arts, Houston] addition offer hope for Houston's best new building in years: What the three architectural firms share is a propensity for bold scale and sculpturally dynamic buildings...selection implies an emphatic repudiation of the self-effacing discretion and restraint of Rafael Moneo's Beck Building...Their buildings won't blend into the background. By [Stephen Fox](#) -- [Steven Holl](#); [Morphosis](#); [Snøhetta](#) - [CultureMap Houston](#)

Royal Alberta Museum short list has global flavour: Favourite teams for facility's renewal hail from U.K., Japan, U.S. and Canada...the successful group will be notified in September. -- [Diamond & Schmitt/HIP Architects/Haley Sharpe Design](#); [IBI Group Architects Engineers/Richard Meier & Partners/Solomon & Bauer](#); [Dialog/Lundholm Associates Architects](#); [Moriyama & Teshima Architects/Architecture/Arndt Tkalcic Bengert/Maki & Associates/Museum Planning Partners](#) - [Edmonton Journal \(Canada\)](#)

Op-Ed: Public input needed to help shape local landmark: Royal Alberta Museum design selection process should be transparency...it's absurd to hold a competition...then deny Albertans the right to see their entries. This is our museum. It belongs to all Albertans, not to the government...So much potential to get Albertans excited about architecture. So why keep us in the dark? -- [Trevor Boddy](#); [Diamond and Schmitt](#); [Richard Meier](#); [Fumihiko Maki](#); [Moriyama and Teshima](#); [Dialog \(formerly Cohos Evamy\)](#) - [Edmonton Journal \(Canada\)](#)

Outside the box: They are changing the face of Melbourne...a new breed of zealous twentysomethings and thirtysomethings are leaving their mark. Meet the city's most promising young architects + State of Design Festival highlights -- [Michelle Emma James/Hub Melbourne](#); [Sophie Dyring/GunnDyring](#); [Graeme Gunn](#); [Rebecca Naughtin/Allen Naughtin](#); [Bruce Allen](#); [Jefa Greenaway/SJB](#); [Eugene Cheah/Bates Smart](#); [Mike Sharp/The Summer Office](#) - [Sydney Morning Herald](#)

A Palestinian architect designs the foundation for a state: Khaldun Bshara's eyes light up as he points out some of the intricate designs and structural elements of the ornate Arabesque building that houses the RMAQ Center for Architectural Conservation...a nonprofit organization that renovates and restores old buildings and heritage sites in the Palestinian territories...created in 1991 by Palestinian architect and award-winning author [Suad Amiry](#). - [Jerusalem Post](#)

Mies's Montreal gas station gets new lease on life: It's been called the most beautiful gas station in the world...And now it's getting a beautiful new life...shuttered-since-2008 Esso station...currently lies stripped of a little of its beauty...but by autumn, the building will be buzzing with youth and seniors as a maison des générations. By [Dave LeBlanc](#) -- [Mies van der Rohe](#); [Paul H. Lapointe \(1968\)](#); [Eric Gauthier/Les Architectes FABG \[slide show\]](#) - [Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

Sir George Gilbert Scott, the unsung hero of British architecture: The restoration of the St Pancras hotel should remind us of Scott, who towered over his profession yet has no biography...The Victorian Society has recovered [his] reputation not as a destroyer of old buildings but as their scholarly rescuer...What was sad in the campaign to save St Pancras was the absence...of Scott's own profession of architect, to which anything old is a nuisance and anything new is a fee. By [Simon Jenkins](#) -- [John Betjeman](#); [William Morris](#) - [Guardian \(UK\)](#)

The Kitchen Debate's Actual Kitchen: In 1959, this Commack ranch house — reproduced in Moscow — showed the Soviets what they were missing...three-bedroom suburban box — sliced open down the middle, so tour groups could come through and gawk — became famous as the "Splitnik"... By [Justin](#)

Davidson -- Jake Gorst; Stanley H. Klein; Raymond Loewy; Andrew Geller [image]- New York Magazine

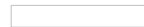
St Basil's Cathedral: Russia's faulty towers? As the Red Square icon turns 450, let's join the Google doodle and celebrate the crazy architecture of this comical creation...it's a good time to step back and consider what a fantastically, psychedelically bizarre symbol it is...Could it have influenced the likes of Gaudi, or even Gehry? By Steve Rose -- Postnik Yakovlev; Aristotele Fioravanti- Guardian (UK)

The art of architecture: The minds behind Datum Showbox build a bridge between those who create structures and those who live in them...Datum:KL -- Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival...is the ice-breaker; three exhibitions..gives visitors a broad view of what architects do and how they think, and guides us to pause and examine KL's "unseen" architecture. -- Malaysian Association of Architects (PAM); CODA (Collaboration Office of Design & Architecture); C'Arch Architecture and Design; Mercy Malaysia [images]- The Star (Malaysia)

"Whare Maori" pays tribute to a pioneer maori architect: One of New Zealand's greatest architects and the first Maori to practice architecture professionally in this country, John Scott, features on Maori Television...a fascinating 13 part series on historical, current and future trends in Maori architecture. It uniquely explores Maori cultural and social history through its built environment. -- Rau Hoskins - Voxxy (New Zealand)

The world's most beautiful wastelands: From industrial ghost towns to abandoned train stations, we explore fascinating post-apocalyptic spots [slide show essay]- Salon

You Survived: Part 1: Regaining Profitability - and Moving Ahead: Take control of the financial life of your business, uncover hidden revenue streams and new service offerings while charting a more stable course for the future. By Michael S. Bernard, AIA, and Nancy Kleppel, Assoc. AIA- ArchNewsNow



-- Celebration: John Lautner Turns 100

-- Belzberg Architects: Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust, Los Angeles, California

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